

Commissioner Merideth's Devastated Hometown Rebuilds After Storms

By Michelle Chadwick

Entering Caruthersville in Pemiscot County seems as if you're entering a different world. It has all the charms of the Deep South, but it is profoundly rooted in Missouri agriculture. Landowners produce everything from cotton, corn and soybeans to sorghum, rice and wheat.

Baughn Merideth, the newest member of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission, is a third generation farmer in the area and plans to pass it along to his son, Baughn Thomas Merideth, Jr., who is ready and willing to accept.



Father and son, Baughn Sr. and Baughn Jr.

"I'd never seen the outpouring of help in all my life."

Merideth Jr. says, "I've been around it [farming] so much I've just come to love it," while his mother, Janna says, "He's got a green gene in him."

In response to the devastation caused by the strike of two tornadoes in April, Merideth and his family continuously reach out to their neighbors while hoping the

crops will not fail.

Merideth's family, composed of his wife, Janna, daughter, Caroline, son, Baughn Jr., and their dog, Tiger, have been farming 1,800 acres,

purchased at the start of the century. Their land consists primarily of wheat, beans and corn on no-till fields where they have implemented many soil and water conservation practices that Merideth now advocates as a member of the commission.

In addition to farming, Merideth is also a full-time Farm Bureau insurance agent, a city council member and a school board member, which keeps him invested in the recovery of Caruthersville more so than the average citizen.

Driving down the street, it is unbelievable to see how one house seems untouched while the

one next to it isn't even there anymore.

continued on page 7



The barrel of the water tower that was blown off during the storms.

DeKalb and Saline Counties Complete AgNPS SALT Projects

By Michelle Chadwick

Two AgNPS SALT projects have been completed in time for the close of the fiscal year in DeKalb and Saline Counties. The two projects are the last of 12 pilot projects to be completed since the program's start in 1997.

The Cameron Watershed project, located in DeKalb

County, was scheduled for completion as of June 30. It focused on pest management in a program where the districts provided a cost-share incentive to landowners for not applying atrazine. Atrazine, a chemical used for weed control in corn and sorghum crops, has been found in the drinking water reservoir and in the drinking water treatment plants. Be-

fore the project started nine years ago, the drinking water reservoirs in the watershed contained significant levels of atrazine, exceeding the maximum containment level established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Today those levels have been significantly reduced.

As of the last report

continued on page 6

2006 Training Conference is Just Around the Corner

It's that time of year again! Mark your calendars for the 2006 Soil and Water Districts Training Conference, Nov. 27-29, at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach. This year's theme, *Celebrate Conservation*, focuses on the successful passage of the parks-and-soils sales tax in August. This tax has been renewed four times in support of soil and water conservation efforts, and this year it passed with an overwhelming 71 percent. Join us in celebrating this encouraging vote of approval from the public.

The fun begins on Monday, Nov. 27, with five workshops being held that afternoon. If you are new to this program, you will want to check out the *New Supervisor and Employee Orientation*. This workshop will help you understand how the soil and water conservation districts conduct business. Other workshops will include an update on the progress of the new, web-based computer system, MoSWIMS, and examples of some of the technical tools used by the districts.



Krysta Harden, chief executive officer of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), and Elizabeth Brown, chair of the commission, will both speak at the opening session and banquet at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

Tuesday will be busy with 16 workshops in three different sessions throughout the day. *Wave of the Future* explains financial options for districts, while *Timely Table Topics* is a round-table discussion about current events affecting soil and water conservation. Learn to lead like you mean it with Christa Jones, NACD North Central Regional representative, as she presents her session, *When I Grow Up, I Want to be a Conservation District Supervisor*. Also, whether you currently have a SALT project in

your area or you would like to get one in the future, SALT training will be from 1:30 to 5:15 p.m. Tuesday concludes with a 1950s theme buffet banquet and entertainment, sponsored by the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD).

The final day of the conference will also be filled with plenty of workshops. Whether you want to brush up on the Sunshine Law or want to learn about staying safe in the workplace, we have a session for you. Gain information about Missouri's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and see if your land is eligible, or bolster your understanding of the auditing process. Wednesday concludes at 11:45 a.m. with lunch, door prizes and evaluations.

We have listened to your suggestions from last year and we have made some changes. We value your opinions and we hope to make the 2006 Training Conference the best one yet!

For conference information visit www.dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/trainingconferenceletter.htm

A Word From Our Director...



Doyle Childers

I'd like to thank Missouri voters for once again supporting the parks-and-soils sales tax. Missouri voters first approved the tax in 1984 and have since renewed it three times, most recently on the Aug. 8 ballot. It is a tremendous responsibility to the future, and we look forward to continuing our efforts to provide Missouri citizens the most outstanding state parks and soil and water resources we can achieve with the funds you have committed to both of those purposes.

This statewide one-tenth-of-one percent sales tax is divided equally between Missouri's system of state parks and state historic sites, and our soil and water conservation efforts. Currently three-fourths of the state park system's budget and almost the entire Soil and Water Conservation Program's budget come from the parks-and-soils sales tax.

The support provided by this tax has helped make Missouri's state park system one of the finest in the nation. This system is composed of more than 140,000 acres in 83 state parks and historic sites plus access to 61,000 acres in the Roger Pryor Pioneer Backcountry. In addition to providing a safe, fun

continued on page 6

Three Fall Regional Envirothons Held

This year three Envirothon areas held their regional competitions in the fall.

Eight Northeast teams gathered on the brisk autumn morning of Oct. 11 at the Si Colborn Group Camp at the Mark Twain State Park for a day of fierce competition. The schools taking part in the event were North Shelby, Kirksville, Highland, Memphis, LaPlata and two teams from the Ralls County High School.

At the end of the day the winners were Ralls County in first place, North Shelby in second and Kirksville in third. This was North Shelby's first year to participate, and they had the top score in forestry, wildlife and oral presentation, and tied for the top score in soils.

Southwest and Northwest held their events on Nov. 1 and Nov. 8. Doling Park in Springfield was the site for Southwest competition and Northwest held its event at the Hartell Conservation Area near Plattsburg, Mo. Results were not available before press time.

The winners from all nine teams will be competing at the state competition on May 3 in Mexico, Mo. The 2007 current issue topic is Alternative/Renewable Energy. The 2007 Canon Envirothon will be held at the Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York. The winning Missouri Envirothon team will compete in that event in late July.

Memos At A Glance

2007-001 - Clarification on Providing Cost-Share on Missouri State and Local Sales Tax

- Explains the legal opinion of the Department of Natural Resources as it pertains to sales tax of field drainage tile and necessary appurtenances.

2007-002 - District Employee Benefit Grant

- Provides to the districts the monthly allocation of the health insurance portion of the benefit grant based on current commission policy.

2007-003 - Information/Education Grant Fiscal Year 2007 Second Call

- Notifies districts of a second call for the information education as well as provides guidance on writing information education grant proposals.

2007-004 - Commission Policy Changes for AgNPS SALT Application Requirements

- Explains commission policy changes, which will affect how the districts write preliminary and final applications.

2007-005 - District Assistance Grant Expansion for FY-08

- Notifies the district of proposed \$220,000 placeholder to be placed in the District Assistance Grant budget at this time.

2007-006 - Revised AgNPS SALT Handbook

- Provides the district with a new copy of the AgNPS SALT handbook that has been revised to include information regarding commonly asked questions.

2007-007 - Information on Preparing the District's Cost-Share Data for Missouri Soil and Water Information Management System (MoSWIMS)

- Provides the district with information regarding cleaning up their district's data in preparation for MoSWIMS.

2007-008 - Eligible Land Survey Results

- Explains the discussion that took place by the commission at its September meeting regarding land being eligible for cost share.

2007-009 - Request for Quarterly District C/S (DCS) Reports and Reconciliation of District C/S Claims

- Notifies the districts that they need to send reports into the program office.

2007-010 - Temporary Changes to the Reseeding Policy

- Explains the commission's temporary policy changes due to drought conditions in regards to reseeding.

2007-011 - Updated Missouri Sunshine Law Booklet

Provides the districts with a new updated copy of the Sunshine Law booklet.

Schedule of Events

- November 3 — Commission meeting at the DNR Conference Center
- November 2-4 — 14 National Small Farm Tradeshow (Columbia)
- November 27-29 — 2006 Soil and Water Training Conference, Tan-Tar-A Resort, Lake of the Ozarks
- November 29-December 1 — National Soybean Rust Symposium (St. Louis)



November 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Commission Meeting	4
				14 National Small Farm Tradeshow (Columbia)		
5	6	7 <i>Election Day</i>	8	9	10	11 <i>Veterans Day</i>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 <i>Thanksgiving Day</i>	24	25
26	27 2006 Soil and Water Training Conference	28	29 National Soybean Rust Symposium	30		

Employee



BAHNSEN NEW PI SPECIALIST

Jessica Bahnsen joined the SWCP staff on Sept. 18 as the new public information specialist.

Bahnsen graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia in May of 2005 with a degree in Journalism and an emphasis in Advertising.

Bahnsen previously worked for the Isle of Capri Casino in Boonville and the Missouri State Troopers Association in Jefferson City.

She says she is looking forward to the new challenges this job will bring as well as working with everyone in the SWC program.

She currently resides in Westphalia and is very busy planning her upcoming

wedding in June.

SWCP WELCOMES BAX TO PROGRAM

The SWCP welcomed new senior office support assistant, Danielle Bax, to the program in early July.

Bax comes to DNR from the Alcoa Correctional Center where she was also an office support assistant, responsible for handling staff and offenders' mail.

She says she has enjoyed her time here so far and appreciates everyone being so friendly.

Bax is originally from Meta and attended Fatima High School and Nichols Career Center. When she's not



working, she enjoys shopping, spending time with her friends and scrapbooking. Welcome Danielle!

MARTIN SAYS GOODBYE MISSOURI, HELLO WASHINGTON

Dean Martin has been a fixture in the Department of Natural Resources for the past 25 years. He started with the DNR in 1981 working in the Laboratory Services Program. In 1991, he transferred to the SWC program as the environmental section chief of the soil scientists, where he remained until retirement.

In addition to managing the soil scientists, Martin was stationed in the program office doing research and contributing to the long range plans of the program.

December 2006



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
					<NSRS	Mo Farm >
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Bureau Federation Annual Meeting				Mo Cattle Industry Convention		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mo Governor's Conference on Agriculture						Hanukkah
3rd National Conference on Grazing Lands						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Christmas Day					

Schedule of Events

- December 2-5 — Missouri Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting (Tan-Tar-A)
- December 7-9 — Missouri Cattle Industry Convention (Springfield)
- December 10-11 — Missouri Governor's Conference on Agriculture (Tan-Tar-A)
- December 10-13 — Third National Conference on Grazing Lands

Happenings

Martin accepted a water resources position with the Lummi Indian Nation in Bellingham, Washington.

He plans on spending his free time with his wife and two daughters.

PLASSMEYER PROMOTED TO ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST IV



Jim Plassmeyer has been with the department and the SWC program for the past nine and one half years. He has been managing the matching grant program as well as the information education program. He was also the district coordinator for eight counties in the central part of the state and the lead contact person for the accounting program. In July, his hard work

was recognized as he was promoted to Environmental Specialist IV.

Some of Plassmeyer's new duties include supervising the four district coordinators in the west side of the state. He will also be involved with developing training for district supervisors and employees and working on the training conference. He will also focus on the MoSWIMS project and accounting program.

He is looking forward to the challenge of supervising the coordinators because that is something that he did not previously do.

When he's not at work, Plassmeyer, who hails from central Missouri, enjoys hunting, fishing, farming and spending time with his wife and two daughters. Congratulations Jim!

VIELE RETIRES AFTER 26 YEARS OF SERVICE

Duane Viele has been working for the Department of Natural Resources for 26 years, all of them for the SWCP. Viele began his career in June of 1980 as a Soil Scientist I. He primarily worked in the Lake of the Ozarks doing soil surveys and maps. He retired in May of 2006 as a Soil Scientist III.

Viele, who resides in Camdenton, is an avid hunter and fisherman. He is looking forward to spending time with his kids, and he will also do some private consulting for on-site waste disposal systems.

Thank you Duane for your many years of service and we wish you all the best!

continued on page 8

Director Childers Says Thanks for Support

from page 2

place to get fit and offering a variety of affordable family getaways, Missouri's state parks and state historic sites also stimulate Missouri's economy. A University of Missouri-Columbia study found that in 2002, visitors spent a total of \$410 million on trips to state parks and historic sites. When this amount is spent and respent in the economy, it brings the state park system's overall economic impact in the state to \$538 million. The study also showed that state park expenditures support 7,660 jobs and generate \$162 million in income.

Money from the soils portion of this sales tax has provided financial incentives and technical assistance for more than 70 watershed projects and has helped thousands of landowners install conservation practices. Sediment is the leading cause of water pollution in Missouri. While Missouri once ranked number two in the nation for its high rate of soil erosion, we have decreased our erosion rates by half since initial passage of the sales tax, saving more than 148 million tons of soil and protecting Missouri's rivers, lakes and streams. Between fiscal year 1986 and March 2005, landowners received more

than \$388 million in assistance.

This tax also includes a sunset clause, which gives the public more opportunity for input on what they feel is important to the state park system and the soil and water program. The clause helps keep the system and program accountable, and also allows for adjustments that may need to be made to ensure the programs are operated efficiently and effectively.

For more information about this tax, visit the department's Web site at [www.dnr.mo.gov/pubs/index.html#pss t]. Again, I thank you for helping us protect and preserve Missouri's state parks and our soil and water quality.

Reprinted with permission from Missouri Resources.



All AgNPS SALT Pilot Projects Now Complete

from page 1

period (June 2006), the overall progress for the project was at 87 percent. By the end of the nine-year project, the district claimed approximately \$655,000 for atrazine reduction incentives and administrative expenses.

The Cow Creek project in Saline County, which also finished June 30, is a project that targeted highly erodible cropland by highest priority. Pesticide, nutrient leaching and run-off were the main concerns. During the eight-year project, the district provided cost-share

incentives to help landowners install conservation practices. Through these practices, landowners were able to accomplish project goals that included reduction of gully erosion on crop and pasture land, use of a reduced amount or non-residual herbicide on 3,400 acres of cropland and write 75 water quality plans to help control agricultural nonpoint source pollution, among others.

As of the end of the project, the overall progress was at 81.3 percent complete, with 40,966 acres in the project

Tips for Winterizing Your Car

Winter is right around the corner, and taking time to prepare your car for winter before the first freeze will save you a lot of trouble, so here's a few tips on how to winterize your car.

1. Check those fluids

Anti-freeze keeps your car's engine, radiator, and hoses from freezing. It also prevents engine corrosion. You should have 50 percent anti-freeze to 50 percent water inside your car's radiator.

2. Keep tires healthy

If you live in a hilly area, you may want to invest in snow tires. If not, you'll probably just want to maintain the pressure in your tires.

3. Don't get iced out

Some have recommended applying a coat of petroleum jelly to the door's hinges and door latches. If it's your lock that frozen, use a lighter or a match to heat the key briefly. Then put it in the lock and turn gently.

4. Charge your battery

Cold temperatures can cut the life of your battery in half. You can test your battery with a tool from a local auto parts store. Also make sure the cables have no corrosion and the connections are tight.

5. Prepare an emergency kit

Get an emergency kit together with jumper cables, tire chains and a tool kit. Also stock up on flares, flashlights, blankets and first aid supplies.

(<http://cnnmoney.com>)

area. The district will have claimed approximately \$1.35 million for cost-share incentives and administrative expenses.

The districts have provided final reports on the Cameron watershed project and the Cow Creek watershed. These final reports outline the goals that were in the project plan and highlight the final accomplishments. These are available online at the program's Web site at <http://www.dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp>. The resources allocated to the program are made possible by the one-tenth-of-one-percent parks-and-soils sales tax.

Merideth Looks to Future of Caruthersville

from page 1

Merideth and his family were lucky that their home was only affected by minor damage and their crops were still



This cotton gin was destroyed by the storms and is in the process of rebuilding.

young enough to recover.

There were wheat fields burned from the remnants of a house that was scattered throughout it,

the water tower's 200-ton barrel was thrown off its perch and crops were destroyed by hail storms.

The National Guard, Red Cross, Salvation Army and AmeriCorps all offered assistance. Many businesses in nearby Cape Girardeau helped by giving the students the opportunity to still attend their prom, which was the week-end following the tornadoes. Even Ty-

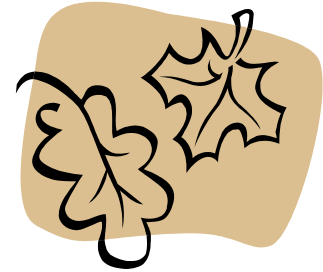
son provided food for their dinner.

In the aftermath of the tornadoes Merideth commented, "I'd never seen the outpouring of help in all my life."

Months later, the residents of Caruthersville are still picking up the pieces in the wake of tragedy, but they have retained their dignity and the southern charm of their small Missouri town.



A no-till cotton field treated with Pix, a chemical used to force crops into productive stage.



"The most peaceful thing in the world is plowing a field. Chances are you'll do your best thinking that way."

- Harry S. Truman



Cost-Share Corner by Ron Redden

One of the requirements for receiving state cost-share assistance is that the practice not be started or implemented prior to board approval of the application. Materials that have been purchased, but can be returned for a refund, do not constitute starting; however, the initiation of eligible earthwork, pipe fabrication and/or welding, construction or spreading of eligible items such as lime or fertilizer are examples that do constitute starting the practice.

Earthwork invoices are required to have a start date on the paid receipt. Because the program office has recently experienced difficulty in determining when welding or the fabrication of components made from pipe was initiated, these invoices also need to include the date this work was started. The reason this determination is diffi-

cult to make is because some vendors date the receipt when the job was ordered and some vendors date the receipt when the work was started. In addition, some vendors are not consistent and do both.

Having a start date on these invoices when submitted with the claim will result in the landowners receiving their cost-share check faster and will reduce the number of times the vendors are asked to go back and determine when the work was started. Last, having the start date on invoices of this type will keep auditors from questioning the cost as an ineligible item.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Soil and Water Conservation Program office at 573-751-4932.



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT
OF NATURAL RESOURCES

P.O. Box 176

FIRST CLASS

U.S. Postage

PAID

Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176

Soil and Water Resources is published bi-monthly by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Soil and Water Conservation Program. Funds for this publication are provided by Missouri's parks-and-soils sales tax.

Editor: Jessica Bahnsen

Contributors: Michelle Chadwick, Ron Redden, Judy Stinson and Chris Wieberg

As a recipient of federal funds, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources cannot discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap. If anyone believes they have been subject of discrimination for any of these reasons, they may file a complaint with either the Department of Natural Resources or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

Employee Happenings Cont'd

WYATT TRANSFERS TO WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAM



Michael Wyatt recently left the SWC program in June to pursue his career as an environmental specialist with the Water Pollution Control Program.

Wyatt began his career with the Department of Natural Resources in December of 2001, working out of the Southeast Regional Office in Poplar Bluff. He was an environmental specialist with the underground storage tank program for 3 1/2 years, until he left to join SWCP. After a year of learning how to map soils, landforms and geology, Wyatt resumed his position as an environmental specialist, but transferred to the public drinking water section of the Water Pollution Control

Program. He is responsible for conducting drinking water compliance inspections, investigating drinking water complaints and conducting sampling as needed.

While he says he worked with many knowledgeable and experienced people in the SWC program, he is looking forward to learning more about Missouri's drinking water supplies.

When he is not protecting our water supply, Wyatt is involved in several ministries in his church and loves to spend time with his family. He also enjoys deer hunting and wants to live life to its fullest!



See You at the Training Conference!

